



BHW holds webinar on national deployment, vaccine plan for Covid-19

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BANGLADESH HEALTH WATCH

Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW), a citizens' platform for improved accountability of the country's healthcare system, held a webinar on Monday, over the national deployment and vaccine plan for Covid-19.

The webinar was organised with a view to discussing the details of the plan and identify areas which need to be further addressed, said a press release.

Dr Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, the convener of BHW, opened the webinar with a reflection of Bangladesh's covid situation while BHW Adviser Dr Yasmin H Ahmed moderated the event.

Dr Mushtuq Husain, adviser to the IEDCR, presented the keynote paper and outlined highlights of the vaccine deployment plan.

The panel speakers were – Dr Farah Kabir, country director of Action Aid Bangladesh; Dr Shafiun Shimul, associate professor at Institute of Health Economics of Dhaka University; Dr ABM Akhter Hamid, public health specialist of WHO; Barrister Rashna Imam, managing partner; Akhtar Imam, associates and member of advisory group of BHW and Dr Rubaiul Murshed, founder of Shomman.

The speakers pointed out that women and teen girls are not included in the priority group list and recommended inclusion of the people associated with kitchen market as they also are highly exposed and vulnerable.

They said there is a gap in terms of equity in the plan. RMG workers are put in the priority list whereas the other industrial workers are left out. The plan includes more formal sector.

The webinar recommended considering inclusion of the informal sector people in the list too.

Another significant aspect the webinar pointed out is that there should be some incentives for the volunteers. If not monetary facility, they can be provided with certificates. Their efforts need to be acknowledged.

Moreover, the speakers suggested the government to utilize public universities for research purposes. They can study the public concerns about vaccination. They can collect data on how many people are interested in and how many of them are not interested in taking vaccine, what are their concerns etc.

The speakers also said that the government should focus on ensuring security while transporting the vaccine.

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